BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 11-42 October 21st, 2011

- **More than a million British Columbians are employed in small businesses**
- **Consumer prices climb 2.4% in September**
- **Number of EI beneficiaries climbs 1.0% in August**

Small Business

- **In 2010, the number of businesses in British Columbia totalled 398,400, about 98% of which were small businesses.** Between 2009 and 2010, the count of small businesses (businesses with 0-49 employees) in the province inched down 0.1%, following a 2.9 per cent boost recorded in 2009. In 2010, small business in British Columbia accounted for 30% of the province's GDP, well above the national average of 27% and suggesting that small business plays a more significant role in the provincial economy in BC than it does in most other parts of the country.

Between 2007 and 2010, BC's Mainland/ Southwest region outpaced the other development regions in small business growth, with an increase of 5.3% (an addition of about 11,600 businesses). Vancouver Island/Coast (+3.8 per cent) was second in terms of small business growth over this period, adding about 2,600 net new small businesses, followed by Thompson-Okanagan (+1.5 per cent, +700 businesses). Conversely, the Northeast (-29.9%) and North Coast & Nechako (-17.3%) regions saw the most notable losses.

Approximately 1,038,300 jobs in BC were derived from small business in 2010. This accounted for almost half (46%) of total employment in the province. Small business employment climbed 1.3% in 2010, due entirely to an increase in the number of small business employees, which jumped 3.5 per cent over 2009 levels. By contrast, self-employment slipped 1.6 per cent, the first decline since 2001. In 2010, self-employment accounted for 19% of total employment.

With an employment surge of 17.8%, the construction industry was the largest provider of new small business jobs between 2005 and 2010. As a result of the construction boom in the province that peaked in 2007, approximately 12,200 jobs were created in this industry. The increase over the five-year period comes despite a significant decline in construction employment in 2009 when the impact of the global economic recession was most notable.

Data Source: BC Stats, Small Business Profile 2011

Prices

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate rose 0.3 percentage points to 2.4% in September.** Despite a decline in the price of durable goods (-2.2%), energy prices climbed higher (+11.8%) and provided much of the thrust for the increase in the overall price level observed. If energy were excluded, consumer prices would have been 1.6% higher in September.

Shelter was more costly (+1.1%) with the price level of both rented (+1.1%) and owned (+0.4%) accommodation climbing. A drop in the price for natural gas (-3.0%) was not enough to offset increases in the cost of electricity (+6.7%), water (+8.9%) and fuel oil (+23.9%), leaving the average household utility bill substantially (+4.9%) higher.

Food purchases cost 3.9% more, as the cost of enjoying a meal at a restaurant increased by 2.8% and grocery bills rose 4.6%. Transportation costs were 6.0% higher than in September

Report **Small Business in BC shows promise in 2010**

Did you know...

84% of BC entrepreneurs would choose business ownership again if given the chance and 92% feel that running a business is a rewarding career choice.

Source: Canadian Federation of Independent Business

of 2010, as the cost of gasoline (+17.3%) rose sharply.

Students faced a 2.3% increase in tuition fees compared to September of 2010, but consumers saw some relief with lower prices for recreational equipment & services (-4.9%).

Inflation rates in Vancouver and Victoria were each 2.3% in September, slightly lower than the provincial average. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Canada's year-over-year inflation rate rose to 3.2% in September, following a similar increase (+3.1%) recorded in August.** The rapid increase in the price level is largely due to a surge in the price of gasoline (+22.7%) and a rise in the cost of food (+4.3%). Nova Scotia and New Brunswick had the highest provincial inflation rates (each +4.2%), while BC boasted the lowest (+2.4%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- **In August, 61,670 British Columbians were recipients of regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, an increase of 1.0% (*seasonally adjusted*) over July.** Nationally, the number of Canadians receiving regular benefits jumped 6.6%, partly as a result of hefty increases in the number of claimants in Quebec (+6.4%), Ontario (+8.2%) and Manitoba (+14.1%).

Data Source:: Statistics Canada

- **Wholesale sales in BC inched ahead 0.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in August, subsequent to a small decrease (-0.2%) in July.** Canadian sales were 0.2% higher, with most provinces posting increases. Only New Brunswick (-0.2%) and Saskatchewan (-4.8%) saw sales weaken. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Investment in non-residential building construction in BC amounted to $1.3 billion in the third quarter of 2011, up slightly (+0.5%) from the second quarter.** This marked the second quarterly increase of 2011. The climb was due to increased industrial (+11.1%) and institutional (+0.5%) spending, while investment in commercial projects lost ground (-0.7%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **New motor vehicle sales in BC crept forward (+0.2%) in August, after stalling in July (-2.8%).** Vehicle sales in the province have been seesawing in 2011, and remain considerably lower than in 2007, before the onset of the economic slowdown.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Science & Technology

- **Federal government spending on science and technology (S&T) is expected to total just under $11.3 billion (*current dollars*) in the 2011/2012 fiscal year, accounting for 4.5% of total federal spending.** Intended S&T expenditure is lower (-5.0%) than in 2010/2011, when spending reached $11.9 billion. This would mark the first decline in federal spending on S&T in at least a decade.

A total of $7.1 billion (63% of federal S&T spending) is intended for research and development (R&D) in 2011/12, with the remaining $4.2 billion allocated for related scientific activities (RSA) such as data collection and information services. Most of the federal S&T spending is expected to go to funding for natural sciences ($8.3 billion), with the remaining $3.0 billion going to the social sciences. It is estimated that in 2011/12, there will be approximately 39,100 federal personnel engaged in S&T activities, a slight increase over the previous year (38,600).

Data Source: SC Cat. No.88-001-XIE

The Nation

- **The nation's composite leading index edged down (-0.1%) in September, the fourth consecutive month of little change.** Much of the slight decrease can be attributed to weak performance in the stock market and manufacturing sector. Conversely, the housing index showed strength, as did retail trade. In the US, the leading indicator climbed 0.4% in August.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada, data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the catalogue number.

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Infoline Report

Originally published in Business Indicators, September 2011

Small Business in BC shows promise in 2010

This article is excerpted from the recently released report *British Columbia Small Business Profile, 2011.* The publication covers key aspects of the small business climate in BC.

The 2011 edition is available on our website: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

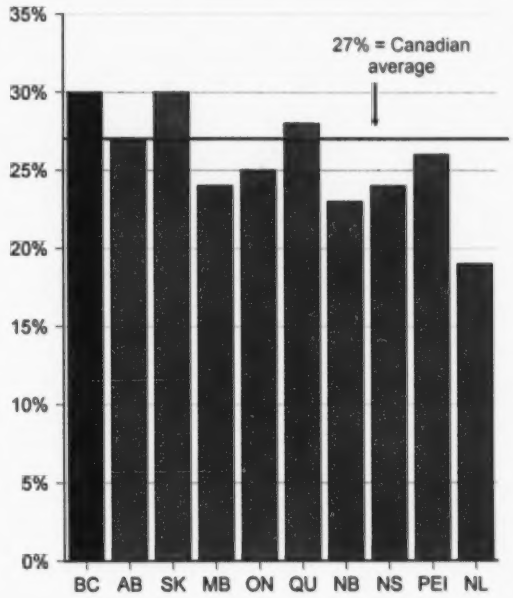
British Columbia's small business sector continues to play a key role in job creation and economic growth in the province. It is the province's primary provider of private sector jobs, reflecting an important and ongoing trend toward economic diversification within the provincial economy. Small business is also a vital source of innovation.

A business is defined as a small business if it is either:

- **A business with fewer than 50 employees**

In 2010, small businesses in British Columbia accounted for 30% of the province's GDP, well above the national average of 27%. Saskatchewan's small business sector also accounted for 30% of that province's GDP, tying it with B.C. for the highest ratio in the country. The relatively high contribution to GDP in B.C. is due in part to the fact that the province has traditionally been more service sector-oriented than most other regions in Canada and that the nation's growth in small business is concentrated in service sector industries. The province with the smallest contribution to GDP from small business was Newfoundland and Labrador (19%), which likely reflects the increased role of large business in that province's offshore oil industry.

Small business contribution to GDP by province, 2010



Source: BC Stats

A total of 398,400 businesses were operating in British Columbia in 2010. Of these, 98% (391,700) were small businesses. More than half (56%) of all businesses in the province were run by self-employed people with no paid workers, or two percentage points higher than the national average of 54 percent. Only three provinces had a higher percentage: Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario (57% each).

Small business growth slows in 2010

Between 2009 and 2010, the total number of small businesses operating in British Columbia inched down 0.1%, following a 2.9% boost recorded in 2009. The slight decline was due to a 0.2% slip in the number of self-employed

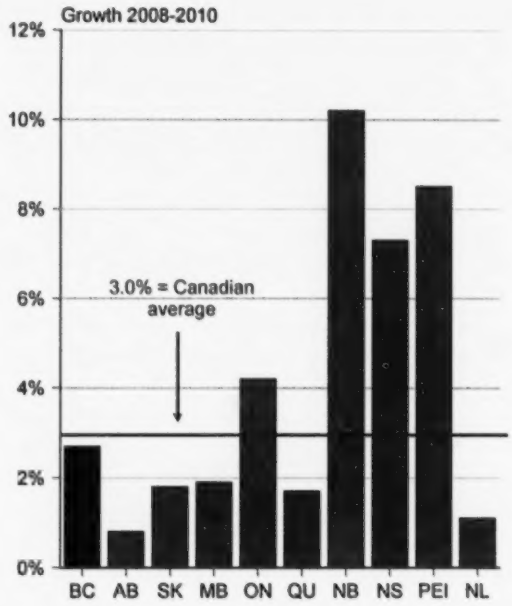
unincorporated small businesses with no paid help, since the number of businesses with employees was relatively unchanged.

Various factors could account for this lull. For example, some self-employed workers may have shifted to paid employment as more jobs became available in the improving economy. Past trends show that the year-over-year fluctuation in the number of small businesses has historically been driven by variations in the number of self-employed individuals in the province. The lack of growth in businesses with employees could simply be the result of the lingering effects of the economic downturn.

Between 2007 and 2010, British Columbia saw an addition of approximately 9,000 small businesses, translating to a growth rate of 2.4% over the four-year period. However, all the growth was in 2009, as there was a slight decline from 2007 to 2008 and again in 2010.

Between 2008 and 2010, the number of small businesses in British Columbia climbed a solid 2.7%, slightly below the national growth average of 3.0%.[1] New Brunswick saw its number surge 10.2%, with Prince Edward Island (+8.5%) and Nova Scotia (+7.3%) right on its heels. Ontario (+4.2%) was the only other province to see higher small business growth than British Columbia, but every province recorded an increase over the period.

BC was slightly below the national average in growth in the number of small businesses between 2008 and 2010



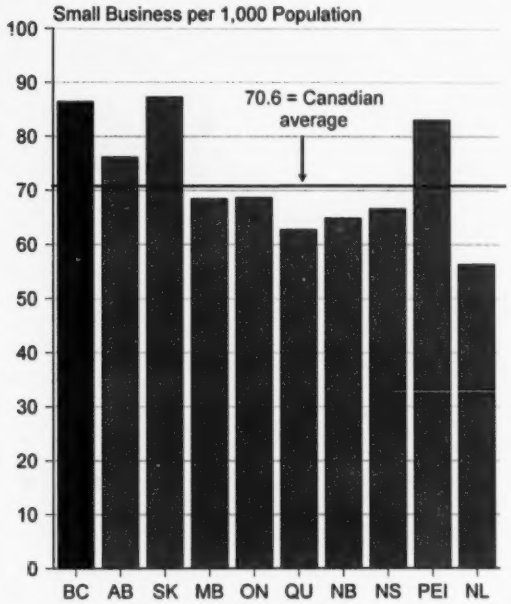
Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Western Canada generally has more small businesses per capita

Small business is consistently more prevalent in the western part of the country, at least in terms of businesses per capita. In 2010, British Columbia held on to its second place ranking among the provinces, boasting 86.4 small businesses per 1,000 people. Only Saskatchewan, with a rate of 87.3, had more small businesses per capita. Alberta (76.1) and Prince Edward Island (83.0) were the only other provinces to exceed the Canadian average of 70.6 small businesses per 1,000 people.

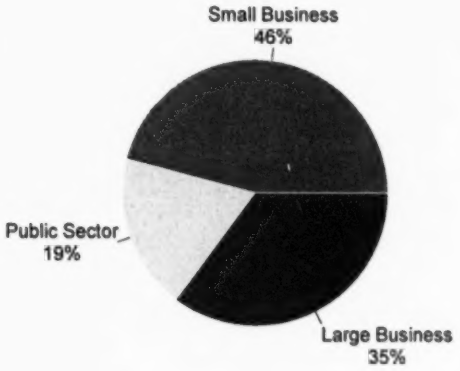
[1] Due to a methodological change in 2008, consistent data for British Columbia are only available back to 2007 and, for other provinces, BC Stats has access only to data back to 2008. As a result, time series analysis is only possible for the 2007 to 2010 period for British Columbia and the 2008 to 2010 period for the other provinces.

Small business is bigger in western Canada



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Almost half the working people in BC worked in small business, 2010



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Small business accounts for nearly half of all jobs in the province

In 2010, small business accounted for approximately 1,038,300 jobs in British Columbia. This represents 46% of total employment in the province, the same share of jobs attributed to small business since 2007.

The private sector employed about 1,830,100 people in 2010 (including both small and large businesses). Of this total, 57% (1,038,300) were in small business, a ratio that has fluctuated only slightly over the past decade. Self-employed workers accounted for 24% of total private sector employment, while 33% worked for a small business. The remaining 43% of private sector workers were employees of large businesses.

In 2010, the private sector employed about 1,830,100 people (including both small and large businesses). Of this total, 57% (1,038,300) were in small business, a ratio that has fluctuated only slightly over the past decade. Self-employed workers accounted for 24% of total private sector employment, while 33% worked for a small business. The remaining 43% of private sector workers were employees of large businesses.

In 2010, small business employment climbed 1.3%, recovering well from a slip recorded in 2009 (-1.2%). This job boost was due entirely to an increase in the number of small business employees, which jumped 3.5% over 2009 levels. By contrast, self-employment slipped 1.6%, the first decline since 2001.

Between 2009 and 2010, British Columbia's small business employment growth compared favourably with that of other provinces. The province's 1.3% rate of growth in 2010 was nearly double that of the Canadian average (+0.7%). Newfoundland and Labrador (+5.8%) led the nation in terms

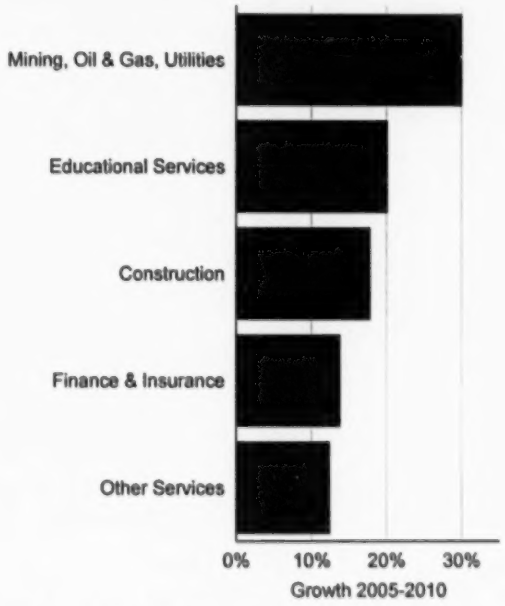
of small business growth in 2010, while Alberta (-1.8%) experienced the largest decrease.

Construction sector created the most new jobs between 2005 and 2010

Between 2005 and 2010, the construction industry was the largest provider of new small business jobs in B.C. with a notable employment increase of 17.8%.[2] During the five-year period, over 12,200 new jobs were created in this industry. The business services sector also added a substantial number of new jobs between 2005 and 2010, increasing its employment by 10.4% and creating around 9,700 jobs (despite a notable drop-off in 2009).

In terms of growth rates, the mining, oil & gas extraction and utilities industry recorded the greatest increase from 2005 to 2010, with a 30.0% surge in employment. The educational services sector also received a significant boost in employment, with an increase of 20.1% (an addition of about 2,200 jobs).

Small business employment – fastest growing industries in British Columbia, 2005-2010



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Self-employment slips in 2010

Self-employed individuals – those who spend most of their working hours running their own businesses – are a sizeable part of British Columbia's workforce. In 2010, self-employment accounted for around 19% of total employment in the province. The long-term picture is similar, with the proportion of British Columbia's workforce comprised of self-employed workers hovering between just under 19% and 20% between 2005 and 2010.

In 2010, the number of self-employed persons, incorporated or unincorporated, without paid help was well over twice the number of self-employed with paid employees and this gap appears to be widening. Since 2005, the number of self-employed business owners operating with staff has declined (down 4.7% between 2005 and 2010), while those without

[2] Unlike business counts, there has not been a data break with regard to employment data, such that it is possible to analyze trends over longer periods than is the case for establishment counts.

employees have expanded substantially (+10.3%). This pattern was reconfirmed in 2010, when the number of self-employed individuals without employees climbed 1.7%, while the self-employed with staff slumped 8.0%.

In 2010, the overall number of self-employed workers in British Columbia declined 1.6%, or by approximately 6,900 workers. This slip marked the first decrease recorded since 2001. A myriad of factors can contribute to the ebb and flow in self-employment numbers, including the overall economic condition of the region over time. In the challenging global economic landscape of the past few years, it is possible that some people turned to self-employment in the face of layoffs or employment uncertainty. As the economic environment has begun to show signs of improving, some of these workers may have moved back into the employee workforce.

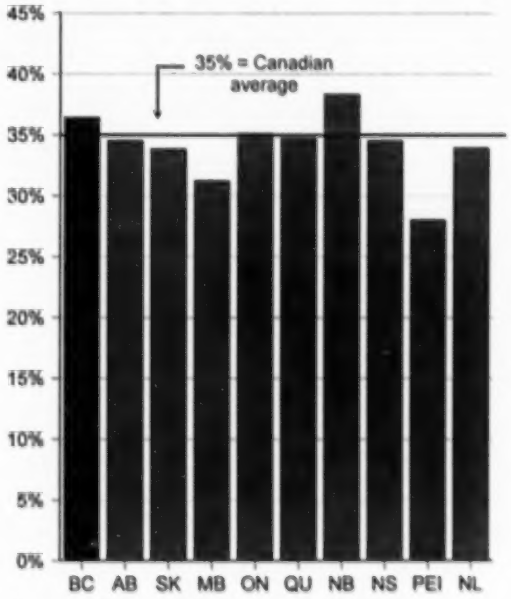
Self-employed characteristics differ from those of employees

There are a number of differences between self-employed people and those who are employees of businesses. On average, self-employed people tend to be older, are more often men and work longer hours. Also, Aboriginals are less likely to be self-employed compared to non-Aboriginals.

More than half (52%) of British Columbia's self-employed people are between the ages of 35 and 54, while 45% of employees fall into this age category. Similarly, only 17% of self-employed business owners are under the age of 35, whereas 39% of employees fit this description. At the other end of the scale, nearly a third (31%) of entrepreneurs are aged 55 and over, compared to a mere 15% of employees. At least a few reasons exist for the variance in age patterns of self-employed people versus employees. Younger people under 25 are less likely to have the skill-set and/or capital resources needed to start and operate a business of their own. For older workers, self-employment could be used as a transition from working at a full-time job to moving into retirement.

Another difference between self-employed persons and employees is with regard to gender. In 2010, almost two-thirds (64%) of B.C.'s self-employed were men, while employees are slightly more likely to be women. Although female entrepreneurs remain less numerous, women have a strong presence in B.C.'s business landscape. In 2010, over 36% of self-employed in British Columbia were women. This was slightly higher than the national average of 35% and the second highest rate among the provinces. B.C. trailed only New Brunswick (38%) in terms of the share of businesses owned by women last year.

The proportion of BC small businesses owned by women is above the national average



Source: Statistica Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

Differences in the number of hours worked per week also distinguish the self-employed from employees in British Columbia. On average, the self-employed work much longer days. About 26% of self-employed individuals work 50 or more hours per week, compared to just four percent of employees. The average work week for the self-employed has fluctuated only slightly (between about 37 and 40 hours), while the average for employees has remained even more stable, hovering around 35 since at least 2000.

Examining self-employment trends for Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia highlights the diversity of small business owners in the province. Aboriginal people living off-reserve continue to be significantly less likely to be self-employed than non-Aboriginals. In 2010, 13.7% of Aboriginal people in B.C. were self-employed, compared to 19.3% of non-Aboriginals. Given the older age composition of self-employed individuals compared to those who are employees, the fact that the province's Aboriginal population is significantly younger relative to the population overall could partly explain this difference.[3] Those Aboriginals who defined themselves as Métis were more likely to be self-employed (15.9%) than those who identified as North American Indian (12.2%).

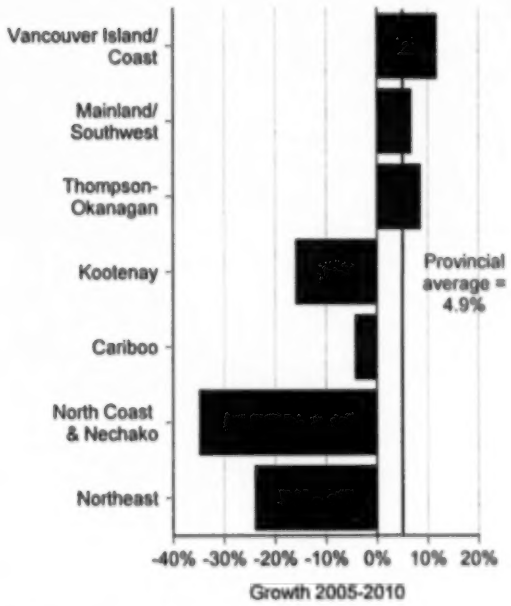
The Mainland/Southwest region is BC's leader in small business growth

Between 2007 and 2010, four of British Columbia's regions recorded growth in the number of small businesses. Over this period, the Mainland/Southwest region led the province with an increase of 5.3%. This translates into an addition of 11,600 businesses over the period. Vancouver Island/Coast (+3.8%) was second in terms of small business growth, adding about 2,600 net new small businesses, followed by Thompson-Okanagan (+1.5%), which saw its small business count jump by 700. Of the regions to show declines, Northeast appears to have suffered the greatest loss, experiencing a decline of about 2,400 businesses (-29.9%). However, North Coast and Nechako (-17.3%, or 1,300 businesses) and Kootenay (-8.1%, or a loss of 1,300 businesses) were also significantly impacted. The Cariboo region experienced marginal growth in the number of small businesses, with an expansion rate of 0.6% (+100 businesses) between 2007 and 2010.

Between 2005 and 2010, the Vancouver Island/Coast region showed the strongest growth in the number of self-employed. This region boasted an 11.7% increase in self-employment, more than three percentage points higher than the next fastest growing region, Thompson-Okanagan (+8.5%). Mainland/Southwest (+6.7%) was the only other region to see a boost in entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, North Coast and Nechako experienced a hefty decline of 34.8%. Northeast and Kootenay also saw double-digit drops in self-employment over this five-year period, while the Cariboo region posted a more moderate loss.

[3] For more on British Columbia's Aboriginal population, including specific labour characteristics, see BC Stats' Aboriginal Peoples of British Columbia: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/abor/ap_index.asp

Self-employment growth rate highest in Vancouver Island/Coast



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

BC's small business horizon

While relatively few British Columbia small businesses exported goods in 2009, they shipped approximately $10.9 billion worth of merchandise to international destinations, representing over 47% of the total value of goods exported from the province.

Clearly, the small business sector is already an important part of the British Columbia economy and new technology could help it grow and become even more essential in the future. Small business plays a crucial role in the economy of British Columbia, not only in terms of its contribution to economic output, but also by providing an abundance of jobs for British Columbians. As the provincial economy continues to diversify, the importance of small business is poised to continue to grow.

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VICTORIA

NOVEMBER 1, 2 & 3, 2011
TUE, WED & THUR
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Health Canada Boardroom
510 - 1230 Government St.
Victoria, BC

WORKSHOP TOPICS INCLUDE:

Survey Sampling

- Defining your information needs
- Fundamentals of collection data
- Maximizing response rates

Questionnaire Design

- Question structure and wording
- Leading, loaded & sensitive questions

Sampling Methods

- Probability sampling
- Factors affection sample size

Processing & Interpreting Data

- Data processing
- Weighting & estimation
- Looking for meaning in the data

Register Early as Space is Limited!

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Organization: _____

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/2011	% change on one year ago
BC	4,573.3	1.0
Canada	34,482.8	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Released Nov 4)		
(BC - at market prices)	2009	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	191,006	-3.4
GDP *($ 2002 millions)*	161,851	-1.8
GDP *($ 2002 per Capita) (reflects revised pop)*	36,287	-3.5
Personal Disposable Income *($ 2002 per Capita)*	25,374	-1.9
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Aug 2011	3,170	1.4
Merchandise Exports - Aug 2011	2,663	-3.7
Retail Sales - Jul 2011	4,916	-0.5
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on	12-month avg
(all items - Sep 2011)	one year ago	% change
BC	2.4	2.4
Vancouver	2.3	2.4
Victoria	2.3	2.2
Canada	3.2	2.8
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		
(seasonally adjusted)	Sep 2011	% change on prev. month
Jobs Created (-Lost) - BC	31.6	
Labour Force - BC	2,466.0	0.8
Employed - BC	2,299.7	1.4
Unemployed - BC	166.3	-9.7
		Aug 2011
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	6.7	7.5
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	7.1	7.3
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Oct 19/2011	Oct 20/2010
Prime Business Rate	3.00	3.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	3.50	3.20
- 5 year	5.29	5.29
US-CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Oct 19/2011	Oct 20/2010
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $ per US $	1.0136	1.0245
(closing rate) US $ per Cdn $	0.9802	0.9763
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Sep 2011	one year ago
BC	843.67	1.2
Canada	845.51	2.0

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Small Business Profile, 2011

The 2011 Edition of the annual profile of small business in British Columbia is now available. The report provides information on British Columbia's small businesses, including number of businesses, employment and small business' contribution to the provincial economy.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/sm_bus/SBP2011.pdf

High Technology Reports

The 2010 editions of BC Stats' high technology reports are now available. The *Profile of the British Columbia High Technology Sector* measures the growth and performance of B.C.'s high technology sector. The key indicators examined include GDP, revenue, employment, wages and salaries, business counts and international trade. The *Input Indicators of the British Columbia High Technology Sector* report highlights conditions that affect B.C.'s high technology sector from a supply-side perspective. The indicators cover key aspects of the educational, business, government, external and labour sectors. For both these reports, the detailed tables are also available in Excel format.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/hi_tech.asp

Released this week by BC Stats

- Consumer Price Index, September2011
- Business Indicators, September 2011

Next week

- Business Indicators, October 2011
- Provincial GDP will be released on Wednesday

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